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INTERVIEW, HOME AGENT, OLD COUNTY

There are 17 home demonstration clubs, with a little over 400 members. The County home economics council is composed of representatives from each of the clubs. The president and one elected delegate represent each club. Presidents are elected by the members of the club. Council officers are elected from the previous year's council membership and may or may not be from the club representatives. Now the council has 40 members. It meets every month except August, if possible I meet with the council every time. The chairman presides at all meetings.

Typical county council meeting: After the call to order, the opening exercises may consist of recreation or other activity that they want. The business part of the meeting consisting of reading and approval of minutes and reporting of the club presidents. They tell about club activities during the month, Committees report on outstanding progress - standing committees. Little if any subject matter material is presented except as it may come up in connection with a committee report on plans and activities. Council is an organization that discusses the problems that concern all the clubs and the program that the clubs are carrying out.

Some of the program comes from that State organization of club women which does some of the planning too. This program is handed down to the council for use in some of their planning. Program from state organization may consist of legislative ideas or ways of helping 4-H Club boys and girls. State organization has standing committees that correspond to those of the county council. Deals with matters of state wide interest generally in the nature of promoting home demonstration work.

Plans from the state organization are printed and made available to county councils as a source of suggestions for the county program. There is no compulsion to use any of the suggestions. A state organization chairman represents the county council in the state organization and serves as a go-between for the state and county organizations.

This year recreation is being emphasized in the state and in this county too, using most of the state organization's suggestions. Present emphasis is on study of the county government to know more about it, including sources of county income and expenditures. Another suggestion is to help 4-H girls by providing two scholarships. This year we adopted about half of their suggestions, making about half of the county program.

Clubs meet twice a month except August and December. I attend about one fourth of the meetings, and three fourths are supervised by the leaders who are volunteers not office holders, or demonstrators. Usually there are five or six volunteer subject matter leaders per club who take over in the absence of the agent. Usually we have two volunteer leaders in each club for the major demonstration. For the occasional demonstrations usually have a leader who volunteers to take over a single specific program. Usually the two leaders prefer to work as a team and receive training then go back to the club and give the demonstration as a team.

A leader training meeting is necessary for each of the club programs so that one or two leader training meetings are held every month. After receiving training the leaders return to the clubs and give the subject matter demonstrations in the club meetings.

Typical club meeting: Opening exercises may include recreation, club business follows with reports of committees and reports of council delegates on activities of council. Usually about 10 minutes is devoted to recreation either before or after the business session, then the demonstration is given.

Sixteen clubs were organized when I arrived in the county about three years ago. At one time there were eighteen clubs and now there are seventeen clubs with the prospect of one new club. There were about 350 members in the beginning. Now there are about 400 while the highest ever was about 420.

Home demonstration women are taking an active part in the community improvement program. Now there are seven organized communities, with a club in five of the seven. The prospective new club is in one of the organized communities and I think that it is an outgrowth of the community activities. Community organization tends to encourage both home demonstration and 4-H Club organization. We have two 4-H clubs that were organized as a result of the community improvement program.

I am not directly responsible for the 4-H clubs now but we have eighteen clubs, three community clubs, one that is more recreation than anything because they have not yet gotten their program well started. Club membership is a little over 400 girls and well over 400 boys.

Community 4-H clubs meet at night and are made up of the local boys and girls. The school clubs may be made up of members from several different communities. Two or three school clubs have both boys and girls, but the others are separate because the membership of some is so large that we could not handle all of them together. The community clubs have the advantage of boys and girls working together.

Community 4-H club offers advantages because it gives more freedom in working with the boys and girls. Time is limited for school club meetings, and school policies restrict the activities that can be carried on. School club meetings are 45-50 minutes and the community meetings are about twice as long.

Community organizations are being set up on a family basis. I work with the county agent to assist in any way we can. Both adults and children attend the meetings. Where there is a 4-H club in the community there are activities for the members and if not then there are special activities for the children. Frequently the assistant agents attend the community meetings with us, but 4-H meetings are not on the same night because it would not allow time enough for the adult meetings.

The community meetings are not entirely business meetings. Some have two meetings a month one mainly for recreation and the other for business. Community organizations consist of committees and their function is to plan and carry out programs. Business consists of reports by committees on progress on the program and possible courses of future action. General activities include all of the members.

Early in the year each committee starts working on plans. The home improvement committee will be headed by a woman who works with the group on plans in this area. Pasture improvement is another — each committee is responsible for one phase of the plan. Committees are appointed and every effort is made to put as many to work as possible.

Membership in community organizations is determined by outlining the area of the community and then all of the families living in the community are considered to be members. They are considered to be members whether they participate or not, but they do work to get participation. In effect a defined community, defined membership and within that some active and other families not active. Well over half and up to about seventy percent of the families are participating in the community organizations.

With community, organization, Home demonstration, 4-H club and others there are many meetings each month in the organized communities. Because they are rural communities there is not the competition of many other activities that are found in the urban areas.

I am a member of the home economics association but it does not have much to do with my program planning. I feel that such memberships are an essential part of my professional development.



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